

## Message Text

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47

ACTION NEA-09

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-02 INR-07 L-02

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 OMB-01 /049 W  
----- 099259

R 181002Z MAR 75

FM AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5751  
INFO AMCONSUL JERUSALEM  
USIA WASHDC  
AMEMBASSY AMMAN  
AMEMBASSY BEIRUT  
AMEMBASSY CAIRO  
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

C O N F I D E N T I A L TEL AVIV 1618

JERUSALEM FOR SECRETARY'S PARTY

E.O. 11652: GDS  
TAGS: PINT, IS  
SUBJ: GOI CABINET--INFORMATION MINISTRY ABOLISHED;  
COMMUNICATIONS PORTFOLIO GOES TO AGMIN UZAN

REF: TEL AVIV 632 AND 929

SUMMARY: GOI HAS ACCEPTED PRIME MINISTER'S PROPOSAL TO  
ABOLISH MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND REDISTRIBUTE ITS  
FUNCTIONS AMONG OTHER GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS. IN SEPARATE  
DECISION GOI HAS ASSIGNED COMMUNICATIONS MINISTRY, WHICH  
HAD BEEN VACANT SINCE FORMATION OF RABIN GOVERNMENT IN  
JUNE 1974, TO AGRICULTURE MINISTER UZAN. END SUMMARY.

BEGIN UNCLASSIFIED

1. ISSUE OF WHAT TO DO WITH INFORMATION MINISTRY AFTER  
AHARON YARIV'S RESIGNATION JANUARY 29 HAS BEEN RESOLVED  
BY GOI DECISIONS ADOPTED SEQUENTIALLY AT MARCH 2 AND MARCH 9  
CABINET MEETINGS, FIRST TO ABOLISH MINISTRY ENTIRELY AND  
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THEN TO REDISTRIBUTE ITS RESPONSIBILITIES. PRIME MINISTER'S

RECOMMENDATIONS WERE MADE ONLY AFTER COLLAPSE OF EFFORTS  
TO BRING HAIFA MAYOR ALMOGI INTO CABINET (TEL AVIV 929) AND  
EXTENSIVE DISCUSSIONS AMONG CABINET MEMBERS AS TO DISPOSITION  
OF INFORMATION ACTIVITIES.

2. DECISION TO ABOLISH INFORMATION MINISTRY WAS APPROVED  
ON MARCH 2 BY ONLY EIGHT MINISTERS, WITH EDUCATION  
MINISTER YADLIN VOTING AGAINST AND ALL OTHERS ABSTAIN-  
ING. THOSE WHO ABSTAINED EXPRESSED THEIR PREFERENCE FOR  
RETENTION OF SOME FORM OF CENTRALIZED CONTROL OVER INFOR-  
MATION EFFORT. AT MARCH 9 SESSION, CABINET APPROVED PRIME  
MINISTER'S PROPOSALS WHICH IN EFFECT RETURN INFORMATION  
FUNCTIONS BACK TO OFFICES FROM WHICH THEY WERE TAKEN WHEN  
SHORT-LIVED INFORMATION MINISTRY WAS FORMED.

3. UNDER LATEST REORGANIZATION, THEREFORE, GOVT PRESS  
OFFICE IS AGAIN PART OF THE PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE; LIAISON  
OFFICE FOR FOREIGN NEWSMEN STATIONED IN ISRAEL AND FOR  
VISITING JOURNALISTS RETURNS TO FOREIGN MINISTRY, AND  
RESPONSIBILITY FOR BROADCASTING AUTHORITY IS VESTED IN EDUCA-  
TION MINISTRY. LATTER ALSO RESUMES CONTROL OF THE INFORMA-  
TION CENTER AND GOVERNMENT FILM CENTER.

4. IN SEPARATE DECISION AT MARCH 9 SESSION, GOI APPROVED  
PRIME MINISTER'S PROPOSAL TO ASSIGN COMMUNICATIONS  
MINISTRY PORTFOLIO TO AGRICULTURE MINISTER AHARON UZAN. IT WILL  
BE RECALLED THAT SINCE FORMATION OF RABIN GOVERNMENT IN  
JUNE 1974 RABIN HAS HIMSELF BEEN HOLDING ON TO COMMUNI-  
CATIONS PORTFOLIO WHILE MORE OR LESS ACTIVELY LOOKING  
AROUND FOR SOMEONE TO WHOM IT COULD BE ASSIGNED.

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5. COMMENT: THESE DECISIONS HAVE NEITHER SIGNIFICANTLY  
STRENGTHENED NOR WEAKENED PUBLIC STANDING OF RABIN GOVERN-  
MENT. THEY CONSTITUTE, HOWEVER, RATHER POINTED COMMENTARY  
ON RABIN'S CONTINUING DIFFICULTIES IN MANEUVERING THROUGH  
SHOALS OF DOMESTIC ISRAELI POLITICS. HE PROVED SINGULARLY  
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UNSUCCESSFUL IN FINDING ANYONE PREPARED TO CONSIDER  
TAING OVER FLOUNDERING INFORMATION PROGRAM, PARTICULARLY  
AFTER YARIV'S ATTACK ON GOI WORK METHODS. RABIN HAS ALSO  
FOUND IT VIRTUALLY IMPOSSIBLE SO FAR TO EFFECT FURTHER  
REORGANIZATION OF RATHER LARGE CABINET. RECENT PROPOSALS  
TO MERGE TOURISM WITH INDUSTRY AND COMMERCE, AND SOCIAL  
WELFARE WITH LABOR RAN INTO PREDICTABLE OBJECTIONS BY  
JUNIOR COALITION PARTNERS WHO SAW THEIR PRECIOUS CABINET

SEATS GIVING WAY TO DESIRABLE OBJECTIVES OF EFFICIENCY  
AND ECONOMY.

6. AS TO INFORMATION MINISTRY, OUR OWN CONCLUSION IS  
THAT ENTIRE MATTER WAS VIRTUALLY DOOMED TO FAILURE FROM  
THE START. ORIGINS OF CONCEPT OF SEPARATE  
MINISTRY WAS MRS MEIR'S DESIRE TO TRIM SAILS OF THEN  
FOREIGN MINISTER EBAN BY SETTING UP INFORMATION UNIT INDE-  
PENDENT OF MFA. WITH TRANSITION TO RABIN GOVERNMENT, YARIV QUICKLY  
LEARNED BITTER REALITY THAT SENIOR MINISTERS DISPENSED  
THEIR OWN "INFORMATION ANNOUNCEMENTS", NEITHER REQUIRING  
NOR WANTING THAT PARTICULAR FUNCTION TO BE COORDINATED  
BY ANYONE ELSE. END CONFIDENTIAL.

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## Message Attributes

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